

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, undated, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. 1898. My dear Alec:

Thank you very much for your nice long letter telling about yourself and the kites. Your account of yourself while not what I would have it is so far satisfactory that I am sure you are no worse and are taking care of yourself. But I feel less than ever satisfied to have you come down here. I do not think you are in any condition to come.

Take all you wrote me about Lieut. Hobson. If it would have been wrong in Admiral Sampson to have let an greenhorn go into the harbor — it would have been still more unjustifiable wrong and wicked in him to have gone himself.

The whole plan of operations perhaps the whole success of the war depends on his being alive and at hand to direct operations, but at hand at a safe distance. Yours is an exactly parallel case. Don't go like Lieut. Hobson into the "jaws of death" the "gates of hell"—

By all means go ahead and invent and perfect all the practical engines of destruction you can think of. It seems to me it would be the most merciful thing, for if we could overwhelm the Spaniards the war would stop. They can never beat us, so the quicker we beat them the better for them too.

Be just as sweet to Mrs. Kennan as you know how I feel so sorry for her and I admire her so much. Words could not tell all the endurance self-sacrifice and heroism she has shown lately. In the broiling sun she has been working outside from early in the morning until late at night working, advising, helping, thinking for others — and all without possible chance of reward to herself. She has been Mr. Kennan's private secretary, errand boy, advisor,

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confident, the helper in the White House, 2 War and Navy Dept., she has been errand boy for Miss Barton, has shopped for her, run backwards and forwards between Washington and Glen Echo, driven out to Camp Alger with her with the thermometer at 92, the dust so thick that trees are dying from suffocation and that when a drive not of sixteen miles but of one is a source of positive discomfort to her. And she has been bright and cheery and full of resources, then while she is more anxious and nervous about Mr. Kennan than ever when he went to Siberia. I don't think she wants to rest much in the sense of being put on the sofa and told to do nothing but she does need to be made to feel that she is thought for and remembered. I think to do nothing would drive her wild, but I think she would like to talk to you and do let her see that you are interested and don't look as if your mind were miles away, before ever the last words are out of her mouth betray yourself by some entirely irrelevant remark, as you do sometimes! —

I have just heard that Prof. Heidsiek of Germany is at Gallaudet Col. and have invited him here.

With much love,

As ever yours, Mabel.